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Weekly Bulletin

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GUY P. JONES
EDITOR

Rats Responsible For Food Infection.

In spite of active campaigns against wild rats in some cities, the danger of food-poisoning from them is still an important problem, and in cities where no eradication is attempted the danger is probably much greater.

This conclusion has been reached by two members of the staff of the University of California Hooper Foundation for Medical Research, Director Karl F. Meyer and K. Matsumura, as a result of a survey of disease-carrying rats in San Francisco completed recently.

With the aid of the United States Public Health Service 775 wild rats were gathered at various places in the city, and of this number 58 were found to be infected with one of two bacterial diseases capable of transmission from individual to individual.

Approximately 2 per cent of the rodents carried bacteria in the intestinal tract and were capable of shedding highly virulent bacilli in their droppings, and thus infecting food. The disease-carrying rats proved to be about 6 per cent in the vicinity of slaughter houses, retail, and second-class residential districts.

In addition to offering this information to encourage those already fighting food-poisoning epidemics, the authors believe it should serve as a warning to those cities making no efforts to control rodents. Comparing the fairly good conditions of California with other places they state: "If the data presented picture conditions as they exist in the community with a scattered rat population, then it is theoretically reasonable to fear that in other cities or towns with a prolific, undisturbed rodent class, a higher morbidity will increase the carrier rate."

The widespread infection of the rats of the city, leads to the conclusion that food may be contaminated either at its source or in the home. In trying out the pathogenicity of the bacteria small quantities of the droppings were placed in the food of kittens and tame rats. They all became seriously sick in from 18 to 24 hours.

This problem is aside from that of rat plague and represents part of a study made by the Hooper Foundation on methods of preventing food poisoning. In another investigation carried on by Dr. Meyer and A. P. Batchelder, in Oakland it was discovered that there are four rat diseases carried by rodents in that place, namely: hemorrhagic septicemia, plague, rat typhoid, and pseudotuberculosis.

The causative germ of the first disease was isolated and classified for the first time and given the name *Pasteurella muricida*. The authors found that the disease is highly pathogenic for guinea pigs, rabbits, mice, and white and gray rats. And a spontaneous epidemic took place among the laboratory rats while they were carrying on the investigation. In the past this disease has complicated campaigns against plague proper, because of its apparent similarity and the difficulty of differentiation between them. A laboratory method permitting of rapid determination has now been worked out at the Hooper

Foundation, using certain bio-chemical reactions.

As a result of the constant war against the rat pest in California, Dr. Meyer finds there are few large nesting places left undisturbed except in occasional garbage dumps. But he believes that the results of the study are ample proof that vigilance should not be relaxed.

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Time To Start Seasonal War On Typhoid.

The Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service, in a statement issued recently, says that the reduction in the prevalence of typhoid fever in the United States marks one of the most signal triumphs of sanitary science. The annual typhoid fever death rate, forty years ago, is said to have been at least 50 per 100,000 population. The past five years this rate has been under 10 per 100,000 population—one-fifth of the rate that prevailed forty years ago.

Among the 77 cities of the United States with populations over 100,000, there are 30, which, in 1925, had a typhoid death rate of less than 2 per 10,000 population. In two of them—Lowell, Massachusetts, and Scranton, Pennsylvania, not a single typhoid death occurred in 1925.

The typhoid fever death rate for the Registration Area of the United States was 6.7 per 100,000 population in 1924. The rate in the cities that year was 4.5 per 100,000 population and in the rural districts (which includes cities under 10,000) it was 8.6 per 100,000 population. This indicates that typhoid fever is now nearly twice as prevalent in the rural area as it is in the urban districts.

Most of the reduction in typhoid fever prevalence in the United States during the past thirty years has resulted, apparently, from sanitary progress in our cities. In the rural districts the source of our food supplies and now also the source of most of our typhoid fever infection, sanitary progress is taking place slowly and only in a small part of our extensive rural area. The lack of rural sanitation is of critical importance, locally and, in view of the interstate aspects. it should be a matter of grave national concern.

The great measure for the prevention of typhoid fever is sanitation or cleanliness. Clean or purified water supplies, sanitary sewage disposal systems, clean and *pasteurized* milk supplies, clean vegetables and shellfish supplies, control of fly-breeding, hygienic precautions at the bedside of the sick and antityphoid vaccination have been and are the factors to reduce typhoid fever prevalence. It is readily within the power of our average community to bring down and keep down its typhoid fever rate to, or nearly to, the vanishing point. Any community with an annual typhoid death rate of 5, or over, is now behind the procession and should be encouraged, urged, and, if necessary, helped or made to do better.

Sanitary measures for the prevention of typhoid fever and other filth-borne diseases are thoroughly economical. Their cost is much less than is the penalty for their neglect. Short, intensive campaigns of sanitation or of vaccination may do considerable good but their results are largely temporary, and, consequently, they are no longer to be advocated as in line with good business procedure. Public health work should be permanent and should be conducted with efficiency and economy.

While the most effective method of preventing the spread of typhoid fever consists in breaking the links which form the chains of infection between the sick individual and the well, through community-wide efforts conducted on a broad scale, every well-rounded program for the control of the disease should provide for proper attention to the case and to the carrier.

The physician should report all cases promptly to the health department and should initiate and apply at the bedside necessary precautions for prevention of the spread of infection until the health department takes charge. Special care should be taken to prevent infection through contact and through contamination of foods in the home. When the case has terminated, before the patient is released, proper bacteriological examinations should be made to make certain that he is not a carrier.

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Breaking Quarantine Brings Woman's Arrest.

A Stockton woman, whose six-year-old son was quarantined because of smallpox, is said to have left her home through a window in order to attend a dance. Her arrest followed. She explained in court that she had fumigated and disinfected her room and clothing and believed that the precautions taken would prevent any danger of spreading the disease. The judge, however, did not agree and she was given a withheld jail sentence of fifty days. Judge Parker, in withholding the jail sentence, said that he would not be so lenient with any possible offenders at future times.

Dr. Wilbur Talks On Modern Youth.

Dr. Ray Lyman Wilbur, President of Stanford University, at a conference on the awakening of responsibility of parents held recently in Oakland, made some informal but none the less significant remarks upon this important subject which is being discussed so generally. Dr. Wilbur maintains a rational, virile, young point of view and he does not fall into the error, common among educators, of condemning modern youth. Among other remarks Dr. Wilbur said:

"It is so easy to have all kinds of motions and emotions in life, and have that apparently make up the whole. Direction is what we want, direction of these impulses. The people who give it must have a deep sympathy for youth, whether they be parents or teachers. They must realize that times change and people must change with them; but that the firm essentials of life, the fundamentals, stay on just about the same. You cannot say we know how to live any better a life than was known in the time of Christ. We do not. We know how to do a lot of more things. We have a greater spread in many directions. But the examples that we have had in the past are just as good as any that we are going to get. With those examples before us, if these forces of the home and of the school can be used, not to mould our youth, not to crush our youth, but to give them direction and guidance so that they can go farther and farther carrying on the new things that science brings, they can go on and have that quality-character. Then, I say, we can be secure even though we are prosperous as a people; even though our numbers increase materially; even though we multiply our luxuries.

"One other thing: have sympathy for the boy or girl living in these times. Have sympathy for the boy or girl trying to find orientation in the confusion of things that offer themselves on all sides. Life was somewhat simple for you compared with what it is for the boy or girl today, with all that comes into the home and the environment outside, and we must have a good deal of sympathy if we are really going to be helpful.

"Somebody has demonstrated by mathematics, and not higher mathematics either, that the long skirt can never come back as long as the automobile stays. Whether that is so or not, I am not competent to judge; but it has been demonstrated. In other words, certain physical relationships depend upon certain mechanical things that take place in the life around us all the way through.

"It is difficult for older people to avoid senile thinking. It is difficult for us not to put too high a credit on docility in youth. The thing that many teachers give the greatest rewards for is docility. Do not put too much faith in that. Guided aggression, guided advance, youth under power and impulse and going ahead in the right direction with the spiritual element in it—that is the thing for which we want to stand."

MORBIDITY.*

Diphtheria.

128 cases of diphtheria have been reported, as follows: Alameda County 1, Berkeley 4, Oakland 7, Butte County 3, Contra Costa County 2, Fresno County 2, Bakersfield 3, Kings County 1, Los Angeles County 7, Alhambra 1, Beverly Hills 1, Los Angeles 48, San Gabriel 2, Torrance 2, South Gate 1, Orange County 3, Brea 2, Sacramento 1, National City 1, San Diego 6, San Francisco 12, Stockton 4, San Mateo County 4. Daly City 1, Redwood City 2, Santa Clara County 2, Yuba City 1, Dinuba 1, Oxnard 1, Yuba County 1, Marysville 1.

Scarlet Fever.

231 cases of scarlet fever have been reported, as follows: Berkeley 2, Oakland 20, Butte County 4, Chico 1, Calaveras County 1, Contra Costa County 1, Richmond 3, Fresno 3, Humboldt County 1, Holtville 1, Bishop 1, Kings County 1, Los Angeles County 8, Beverly Hills 1, Burbank 2, Compton 1, El Monte 1, El Segundo 1, Glendale 2, Long Beach 16, Los Angeles 48, Monrovia 2, Pasadena 5, Pomona 3, Redondo 1, Santa Monica 1, Whittier 2, West Covina 2, Monterey Park 1, Maywood 1, Merced 1, Monterey County 2, Monterey 1, Orange County 2, Fullerton 1, Huntington Beach 2, Santa Ana 1, Sacramento 2, Hollister 1, San Bernardino County 2, San Diego County 2, San Diego 3, San Francisco 31, Stockton 5, San Luis Obiso County 1, Burlingame 1, Redwood City 1, San Mateo 2, Santa Clara County 7, Gilroy 2. Mountain View 1, Palo Alto 3, San Jose 10. Santa Clara 1, Stanislaus County 3, Tehama County 1, Tulare County 2, Exeter 1, Ventura County 2.

Measles.

3490 cases of measles have been reported, as follows: Alameda County 4, Alameda 30, Berkeley 85, Oakland 83, Piedmont 5, Plymouth 2. Sutter Creek 5, Butte County 4, Chico 1, Williams 11, Contra Costa County 6. Richmond 4, Fresno County 53, Fresno 23, Glenn County 4. Orland 33, Humboldt County 3. Eureka 31, Calexico 1, Kings County 7, Hanford 12, Lemoore 3. Lakeport 10, Los Angeles County 295, Alhambra 49. Arcadia 13, Avalon 2, Azusa 1, Beverly Hills 8. Burbank 1, Claremont 1. Compton 20, Covina 1, El Monte 11, Glendale 91, Hermosa Beach 12, Huntington Park 6, Inglewood 12, Long Beach 127, Los Angeles 942, Manhattan Beach 13, Monrovia 43, Pasadena 98. Pomona 20, Redondo Beach 19, San Fernando 5, San Gabriel 11, Santa Monica 2. South Pasadena 14, Whittier 8, Torrance 1, Lynwood 4. Hawthorne 15, South Gate 12, Monterey Park 6, Maywood 5 Tujunga 7. Madera 2, San Rafael 6, Sausalito 11, Merced County 3, Gustine 17,

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*From reports received on March 28th and 29th for week ending March 26th.

Merced 1, Monterey County 22, Monterey 4, Grass Valley 4, Orange County 36, Anaheim 42, Brea 2, Fullerton 6, Huntington Beach 4, Orange 6, Santa Ana 26, La Habra 24, Lincoln 3, Sacramento 17, Hollister 1, San Bernardino County 7, Colton 1, Redlands 6, San Diego County 54, Chula Vista 42, La Mesa 2, National City 11, Oceanside 1, San Diego 359, San Francisco 137, San Joaquin County 23, Stockton 11, San Luis Obispo County 1, Paso Robles 5, San Mateo County 9, Burlingame 14, Daly City 4, Redwood City 15, San Mateo 3, Santa Barbara County 13, Santa Barbara 69, Santa Maria 1, Santa Clara County 17, Gilroy 7, Los Gatos 22, Mountain View 5, Palo Alto 13, San Jose 9, Santa Clara 2, Santa Cruz County 3, Watsonville 8, Mount Shasta City 1, Solano County 1, Benicia 9, Vacaville 2, Sonoma County 5, Stanislaus County 1, Turlock 3, Sutter County 15. Tulare County 5, Lindsay 18, Tuolumne County 4, Sonora 7, Oxnard 1, Yolo County 5, Davis 4, Woodland 3.

Smallpox.

15 cases of smallpox have been reported, as follows: Oakland 3, Sacramento 2, San Francisco 1, Stockton 4, Santa Clara County 2, Sunnyvale 3.

Typhoid Fever.

8 cases of typhoid fever have been reported, as follows: Los Angeles 2, South Pasadena 1, Sacramento County 1, San Diego County 1, San Joaquin County 2, Ventura County 1.

Whooping Cough.

206 cases of whooping cough have been reported, as follows: Alameda 4, Berkeley 40, Oakland 19, Colusa County 9, Fresno County 3, Eureka 12. Hanford 5, Los Angeles County 9, Alhambra 2, El Monte 2, Glendale 7, Long Beach 9, Los Angeles 23, Monrovia 2, Pasadena 1, San Gabriel 4, South Pasadena 2, Mariposa County 1, Orange County 1, Anaheim 1, La Habra 1, Ontario 1, San Diego County 5, San Diego 7, San Francisco 33, Stockton 2, Tulare County 1.

Meningitis (Epidemic).

Four cases of epidemic meningitis have been reported, as follows: Los Angeles 2, Marin County 1, Fort Bragg 1.

Leprosy.

Two cases of leprosy have been reported, as follows: Los Angeles 1, Sacramento 1.

Poliomyelitis.

Two cases of poliomyelitis have been reported, as follows: Bakersfield 1, Santa Cruz 1.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE REPORTS.

Disease	1927				1926			
	Week ending			Reports for week ending Mar. 26 received by Mar. 29	Week ending			Reports for week ending Mar. 27 received by Mar. 30
	Mar. 5	Mar. 12	Mar. 19		Mar. 6	Mar. 13	Mar. 20	
Anthrax	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Botulism	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chickenpox	879	742	644	533	551	438	427	375
Diphtheria	133	143	176	128	115	99	151	132
Dysentery (Bacillary)	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	0
Encephalitis (Epidemic)	3	2	0	0	5	1	2	2
Gonococcus Infection	120	77	83	76	109	88	73	112
Influenza	104	86	87	74	163	64	131	35
Jaundice (Epidemic)	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Leprosy	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Malaria	0	1	0	0	4	0	0	1
Measles	3995	3991	3330	3490	124	161	170	189
Meningitis (Epidemic)	1	3	6	4	3	1	4	5
Mumps	299	329	283	330	340	443	366	363
Paratyphoid Fever	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0
Pneumonia (Lobar)	62	74	60	61	85	78	58	50
Poliomyelitis	1	0	1	2	3	2	6	1
Rabies (Animal)	8	12	7	5	5	5	7	13
Rabies (Human)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Rocky Mt. Spotted Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scarlet Fever	243	266	220	231	187	145	181	147
Smallpox	16	17	26	15	183	174	105	126
Syphilis	156	127	98	91	140	108	93	106
Tetanus	1	0	0	3	2	1	1	1
Trachoma	23	2	3	1	2	1	1	56
Trichinosis	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Tuberculosis	228	210	189	214	231	244	169	233
Typhoid Fever	7	4	22	8	6	5	12	7
Typhus Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Whooping Cough	139	168	189	206	76	69	87	52
Totals	6422	6254	5429	5476	2335	2127	2047	2009

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